

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CPR-01 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 PA-01 SY-05 FBIE-00

USSS-00 EB-07 FCC-01 H-02 DRC-01 SAJ-01 /076 W

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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6120

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0811

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET PROTEST OVER LOCAL TELEVISION PROGRAM NAMING
SOVIET PERSONNEL

REF: USUN 591

1. NEW YORK CHANNEL SEVEN T.V. EVENING 2 MARCH TELECAST ON ITS
11 P.M. NEWSCAST THE NAMES OF FIVE SOVIET BLOC
OFFICERS AT UNITED NATIONS ALONG LINES RECENT FREE POLAND
CIRCULAR. ONE OF USUN OFFICERS HEARD BROADCAST AT 11 P.M. AND
IT IS POSSIBLE THERE WERE OTHER PROGRAMS EARLIER. IT WAS ANNOUNCED
THAT ON MARCH 3 PROGRAM ORGANIZERS OF THE FREE POLAND MOVEMENT
WOULD BE INTERVIEWED.

2. THIS MORNING AMBASSADOR MAKEYEV OF SOVIET MISSION
TELEPHONED IN GREAT URGENCY, CALLING BACK THREE TIMES
BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO RETURN HIS CALL FOLLOWING MEETING IN
WHICH I WAS ENGAGED. I TELEPHONED BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
AND, AS WE SUSPECTED, TELEVISION PROGRAM WAS SUBJECT OF HIS
CALL. MAKEYEV SPOKE IN HARSH COLD TONES BUT AT TIMES SEEMED
ALMOST TO LOSE CONTROL OF HIMSELF. HE SAID THAT HE WAS
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LODGING A "REALLY STRONG PROTEST" OVER "UNFRIENDLY

BROADCAST". ON CHANNEL SEVEN INVOLVING EMPLOYEES OF SOVIET AND UKRAINIAN MISSIONS. I ASKED IF HE WERE CALLING ON BEHALF OF THE UKRAINIAN MISSION AS WELL AND FROM THERE ON OUT HE RESTRICTED HIS COMPLAINT TO LISTING OF SOVIET OFFICIALS, ALTHOUGH HE COMMENTED THAT UKRAINIAN HAD BEEN MENTIONED ALSO.

3. MAKEYEV TERMED THE TELEVISION PROGRAM "UNFRIENDLY" ALIEN AND NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND USSR." HE REPEATED THE DESCRIPTION OF "UNFRIENDLY" AND "ALIEN" QUITE A FEW TIMES. HE SAID THE SOVIET MISSION EXPECTED US TO "UNDERTAKE ALL NECESSARY MEASURES TO PREVENT FURTHER SUCH BROADCASTS." THIS WAS PART OF A CAMPAIGN DIRECTED AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION AND LAST NIGHT'S TELEVISION PROGRAM "CREATES CONDITIONS FOR FURTHER PROVOCATIONS." HE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES SOVIET DEMAND THAT USG UNDERTAKE MEASURES TO PREVENT FURTHER SUCH BROADCASTS.

4. I TOLD MAKEYEV THAT I HAD NOT SEEN OR HEARD THE PROGRAM MYSELF AND DID NOT KNOW WHAT HE MEANT BY "UNFRIENDLY" AND "ALIEN". MAKEYEV DID NOT GO INTO SPECIFICS AND KEPT REPEATING THE SAME WORDS. I GOT THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION HE WAS READING FROM A PREPARED PAPER. I SAID I TOOK NOTE OF HIS PROTEST AND WOULD LOOK INTO THE SITUATION. I WAS FRANK TO SAY I DID NOT KNOW WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH RESPECT TO A FREE TELEVISION BROADCAST. THIS LED TO RECRIMINATIONS ON HIS PART USG'S HABITUALLY TAKING REFUGE IN FREE PRESS CONCEPT. I REPLIED THAT OUR TWO SOCIETIES HAD DIFFERENT SYSTEMS AND WE HAD BETTER LET IT GO AT THAT RATHER THAN GO INTO EXTENDED ARGUMENT.

5. AS THE CONVERSATION WORE ON, I SAID TO MAKEYEV THAT I ACCEPTED HIS CONCERN FOR SOVIET CITIZENS; THAT WAS NATURAL AND QUITE APPROPRIATE ON HIS PART. I DID POINT OUT TO HIM, HOWEVER, THAT THE NAMING OF NAMES SEEMED TO BE PART OF A DEVELOPING TREND. THE NAMES OF AMERICAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAD BEEN PUBLISHED, TOGETHER WITH THEIR ADDRESSES, RECENTLY IN CAPITALS SUCH AS PARIS AND LONDON. THIS SEEMED TO BE A PROBLEM BOTH OF US HAD TO ENDURE. THIS ARGUMENT DID NOT APPEAL TO MAKEYEV,
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WHO REPLIED SHARPLY HE WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN WHAT HAPPENED TO SOVIET CITIZENS IN THE UNITED STATES. I CLOSED THE CONVERSATION BY REPEATING ONCE AGAIN THAT I TOOK NOTE OF HIS PROTEST AND WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER WITHOUT DELAY. MAKEYEV REQUESTED ME TO CALL BACK WITH THE RESULTS, AND I TOLD HIM I WOULD TRY TO DO SO.

6. COMMENT: USUN OF OPINION WE SHOULD NOT TAKE MATTER

UP DIRECTLY WITH CHANNEL SEVEN AUTHORITIES. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH
RAISE WITH FCC QUESTION OF WHETHER RIGHTS OF PRIVACY OF OTHER
CONSIDERATIONS WOULD APPLY IN THIS INSTANCE. FOR OUR PART, WE
CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.
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